

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR LATIN AMERICA AND
THE CARIBBEAN: PKO AND THE CASE OF HAITI

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ABSTRACT

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On February 29, 2004, only ten years after the United States last intervened in Haiti to reinstall President Jean Bertrand Aristide, U.S. military forces once again entered Haiti to stabilize the country after President Aristide fled as violence gripped the country. However, unlike the 20,000 troops, significant resources, and ambitious objectives of Operation Uphold Democracy in 1994, the recent intervention was executed with a much smaller force, with much more limited United States government goals, objectives, and expectations. This paper will analyze the events leading to the U.S. decision to intervene and the rationale to limit U.S. objectives and participation. It will then examine the planning, organization, objectives, and effectiveness of the Multinational Interim Force's (MIF) and the transfer of responsibility to the U.N. stabilization force. The paper will conclude with recommendations on how the U.S. may build upon and strengthen the demonstrated capacity for collective security operations for Latin America and the Caribbean in the future.

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CAPACITY BUILDING FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: PKO AND THE CASE OF HAITI

Haiti is clearly unable to sort itself out, and the effect of leaving it alone would be continued worsening chaos. Our globalized world cannot afford such a political vacuum, whether in the mountains of Afghanistan or on the very doorstep of the sole remaining superpower.

- Kofi A. Annan
Secretary General of the United Nations

Only ten years after the United States last intervened in Haiti to reinstall President Jean Bertrand Aristide, on February 29, 2004, U.S. military forces once again entered Haiti to stabilize the country after President Aristide was forced to flee as violence and demonstrations against him gripped the country. Unlike the 20,000 troops, significant resources, and ambitious objectives of Operation Uphold Democracy in 1994, the recent intervention (Operation Secure Tomorrow) was executed with a much smaller force and more limited United States government goals, objectives, and expectations. Reflecting significant changes in the international security environment since 1994, the U.S. government did not devote large quantities of U.S. soldiers and resources on a crisis deemed unrelated to the War on Terror. Instead, the U.S. led an intervention for a very brief period while it enlisted the support of, and relied upon the countries in this hemisphere to invest in and determine Haiti's long-term future. While the U.S. commanded and dominated the U.N. mission after the 1994 intervention, only four U.S. servicemen remained with U.N. forces after the 2004 intervention.

Although U.S.-led, Operation Secure Tomorrow emerged as a coalition effort with rapid contributions from France, Canada and - remarkably - Chile. Equally significant was the quick decision by Brazil to lead the follow-on U.N. stabilization mission under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter and the successful transfer of responsibility of the Multinational Interim Force (MIF) to the U.N. force, dominated in leadership and contributions by nations from this hemisphere other than the United States. The response by countries in this hemisphere relieved the U.S. of the need to tie up precious forces and resources as the country's focus remained on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. This is a positive indication that other countries in the region are willing to make strong commitments to resolve crises in the hemisphere. Hence, lost in the difficult and very complex efforts to stabilize Haiti, is the subtle sign that significant progress has been made for the region to collectively deal with complicated future threats and crises, not necessarily led and dominated by the U.S.

This paper will analyze the events leading to the U.S. decision to intervene and the rationale to limit U.S. objectives and participation. It will then examine the planning, organization, objectives, and effectiveness of the Multinational Interim Force (MIF) and the smooth transfer of responsibility to the U.N. stabilization force. The paper will conclude with recommendations on how the U.S. may build upon and strengthen the demonstrated capacity for future collective security operations for Latin America and the Caribbean.

THE ROAD TO ANOTHER INTERVENTION

Haiti is inextricably linked to the United States by proximity, history, and demographics. Political, economic and social disorder has prompted U.S. military intervention three times within the last 100 years. In 1915 the U.S. intervened to quell political and economic turmoil and governed Haiti for 19 years until 1939. In 1994 the U.S. restored Haiti's democratically elected government following a military takeover three years prior. Forces remained for six years until the disestablishment of the U.S. Support Group Haiti in 2000. Unlike 1994 when the Clinton Administration deliberately planned on intervening in Haiti to restore President Aristide, the Bush Administration was compelled to action by a rapid escalation of violence and unrest. Up to that point, the Bush Administration largely consigned resolving Haiti's problems to working within the Organization of American States (OAS) framework.

The decision and magnitude of the February 2004 intervention in Haiti was heavily influenced by the U.S. focus on the War on Terror and its commitments throughout the world in that effort, most significantly in Iraq and Afghanistan. The recognition that to move Haiti forward, a considerable, persistent, long-term involvement would be needed was something the U.S. government was not willing to undertake while its focus was elsewhere.¹ Additionally, the gradual yet ultimate failure of the substantial U.S. and United Nations intervention in 1994 to improve conditions and reverse Haiti's history of political violence, human rights violations, endemic poverty and human misery weighed heavily on the minds of decision makers. Consequently, the decision was made to intervene with a small force to achieve narrow and limited objectives to stabilize the country, while pushing the U.N. and countries within the hemisphere to deal with Haiti's long-term future.

The U.S. government faced three possible options as the political crisis and violence in Haiti escalated and intervention became inevitable in early 2004. The essence of deciding on an option was timing intervention to support Aristide or allowing events to force Aristide to depart, according to Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, Roger Noriega: "We had to make a decision whether we were going to put American lives at risk,

knowing what we know about President Aristide, and expect that he would be able to make the most of that opportunity to govern effectively and honestly, nonviolently.”² Thus, the options included supporting and perpetuating Aristide in office; forcibly removing Aristide; or waiting for an opportunity for Aristide to either leave or be forced out of office with the hope that another era of ending Haiti’s troubled history could take place. The first option - to intervene early to stabilize the country and protect President Aristide - was pushed by many members in Congress, the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), and by Aristide himself. However, after four years of political impasse in Haiti as democratic and human rights conditions worsened, coupled with increasing use of mob violence, politicization of the Haitian National Police (HNP) and a poor record on stemming drug trafficking, the Administration no longer viewed progress as possible under Aristide. Consequently, the decision was made “...not to put American lives at risk for the sole purpose of buying Aristide more time to perpetuate such policies.”³

Tired of Aristide and with no enthusiasm for intervening to protect him, a second option was to forcibly remove Aristide. This however, would have met wide-scale national and international condemnation, and exacerbated election-year politics already focusing on the U.S. decision to intervene in Iraq. Additionally, this option precluded a limited U.S. intervention. It gave the U.S. the responsibility and inherent commitment of resolving the crisis between Aristide’s supporters and opponents, and would force the U.S. into a major nation-building role. Complicating matters would be limited if any hemispheric support. A U.S. intervention to remove Aristide would rule out legitimacy in the eyes of Latin America and Caribbean countries and consequently the support of the Organization of American States (OAS) and the hemisphere’s militaries and resources for longer term stabilization in Haiti - a critical condition of any U.S. involvement in Haiti.

The option taken instead was to use forceful and hard-line diplomacy and statements by key officials in the administration to press Aristide to resign to avoid further violence and bloodshed. Simultaneously, the U.S. prepared a small force to stabilize the country while enlisting the support of nations within the hemisphere to take responsibility for Haiti’s future in the long run. Evidence of the evolution of the policy became clearer as events unfolded and the administration’s rhetoric gradually changed.

PRECURSORS

For the remainder of the decade following the 1994 intervention, Haiti received an extraordinary degree of U.S. policy attention and resources in an attempt to strengthen democratic institutions, alleviate poverty, and stem illegal migration and drug trafficking. The

peaceful transfer of the presidency following elections in 1995 provided hope for Haiti's future. However, a combination of the international community's failure to follow through on its long-term commitment for Haiti's future and the inability of Aristide and other Haitian political leaders to reconcile differences and take the necessary steps to build democratic institutions, improve economic conditions, and enforce the rule of law loomed on the dark horizon. Following the flawed parliamentary elections and meaningless presidential election in 2000 bringing Aristide back to power, the political system in Haiti essentially collapsed, a political impasse ensued, and international assistance concomitantly receded. The hope that Haiti would emerge as a modern democratic society, respectful of human rights and the rule of law, and raise itself from being the poorest country in the hemisphere and one of the poorest in the world, faded as the country was marked by ever increasing demagoguery, lawlessness, impunity, and rampant drug trafficking. For Haiti watchers, it became a matter of "when" and not "if" intervention would again be necessary.

Diplomatic efforts to resolve the political impasse and avoid another repeat of history proved futile. After condemning the 2000 elections, the Organization of American States (OAS) was ineffective in negotiating a political solution between President Aristide and his opponents. The U.N. pulled its mission out in 2001, lamenting that it had no governmental institutions with which to work. The Caribbean Community's (CARICOM) plan of action also failed.

U.S. RELATIONS WITH HAITI

Following the 2000 elections, the Clinton Administration stopped providing assistance directly to the Haitian government until the problems of the elections were addressed. Nevertheless, the U.S. government remained Haiti's largest bilateral aid donor focusing mainly on humanitarian and economic assistance through non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and worked towards a political solution with the OAS and CARICOM.⁴ Meanwhile, Haiti emerged as a major transshipment point for cocaine being transported from South America to the U.S. with either direct involvement or complicity by Haitian government officials.⁵ The U.S. government consequently decertified Haiti in 2001 for its lack of effort in countering drug trafficking. Relations with Haiti were further reduced and assistance became more targeted and restrictive. U.S. military and security assistance programs and engagement activities were curtailed and assistance was limited to the Haitian Coast Guard since it was the only security institution that remained professional, had not been politicized, and remained relatively corruption free.

The Bush Administration's Haiti policy focused on four areas. The first was implementing the 2002 Organization of American States Resolution 822, to resolve the political impasse, eventually leading to free and fair elections. Second was providing targeted humanitarian aid and assistance to meet the Haitian people's needs. Third was reducing the flow of illegal narcotics through Haiti to the U.S. The fourth was reducing illegal migration to the U.S. and more importantly avoiding a mass migration to the U.S triggered by political events or ambiguous U.S policy regarding migration.⁶ With the administration's focus on the War on Terror, resources for events in the hemisphere waned. Thus, although Haiti was increasingly isolated from the world community and spiraling towards a failed state, the administration placed responsibility for solving Haiti's troubles on the OAS.

ESCALATION OF VIOLENCE

The opposition movement's ability to unify many of its elements and demand the resignation of President Aristide in late 2003 proved to be the trigger to the recent crisis.⁷ However, the state of affairs compelling intervention proceeded quickly in early 2004 as the government rapidly collapsed and the country was terrorized by a few hundred armed thugs and gangs.⁸ In a three week period, the opposition groups rode a wave of public discontent, were able to easily defeat the ineffective Haitian National Police, capture key towns and villages around the capital of Port-au-Prince, and force President Aristide to flee as they threatened to enter the capital.

The opposition gangs consisted primarily of former military members and other thugs led by former Police Chief Guy Phillipe and Louis Chamblain, both notorious for attempted coups, death squads, violence, and murder. In Haiti's environment of lawlessness, impunity and drug trafficking they had easy access to arms and had no real political agenda, except to force Aristide out. On the other side, Aristide created, armed, and directed the "chimères" - gangs loyal to him to intimidate and protect him from the opposition. The politicization, rampant corruption, and lack of resources of the HNP made them an ineffective and undisciplined force incapable of preventing violence and restoring order.

In early February of 2004, events accelerated rapidly and violently. Anti-Aristide protests increased throughout the country and armed opposition gangs began taking control of cities in the North, most notably, Gonaives, Haiti's fourth largest city, on February 5th. Twelve Haitian national Police (HNP) were killed on February 12th in an attempt to retake the city. On February 17th, the police chief in the town of Hinche was murdered and the rest of his force fled.

Violence had reached such a level that on February 18th, the U.S. Embassy evacuated non-essential personnel and their families.

On February 23rd Cap Haitien, Haiti's second largest city, fell to opposition groups. A multinational team from the U.S., France, OAS, and CARICOM traveled to Haiti with a power sharing plan to resolve the crisis and end the violence.⁹ Fully aware that his hold on power was diminishing rapidly, Aristide agreed to the proposal and called for an international force to intervene and restore order. However, emboldened by their success, the opposition refused. At the U.S. Embassy's request, a Fleet Antiterrorism Security Team (FAST) of approximately 50 personnel deployed to augment protection of the U.S. Embassy and other key U.S. facilities. Statements made by U.S. officials began blaming Aristide for the current crisis and called on him to do what was best for the country, implying that he needed to step down. This was a significant change in tone from previous announcements, which placed blame and called for both sides to end the violence.

As the opposition began to move towards the capital of Port-au-Prince, pro-Aristide gangs began to set up blockades throughout the city and looting and violence became rampant. Nearly a hundred Haitians had been brutally killed since the violence began. By February 27th, Aristide's hold on power was teetering and rumors were rampant that he would resign. However, Aristide continued to posture, hoping that an international force would arrive. As Port-au-Prince braced for a bloodbath and with a humanitarian crisis on the verge of unfolding, demands for intervention increased within the U.S. and internationally. Members of the U.S. Congress criticized the administration's inaction and called for U.S. unilateral or multilateral intervention, as did editorials in major newspapers.¹⁰ The U.S. and France became increasingly active in trying to resolve the crisis.

The U.N. Security Council met on February 26th and endorsed the CARICOM/OAS power-sharing plan to resolve the crisis, while committing to studying an international force to support a political settlement.¹¹ The French government publicly called for President Aristide to leave and along with CARICOM called for a peacekeeping force to be inserted to stabilize the violence.¹² Not wanting to intervene to perpetuate Aristide and perhaps seeing an opportunity for his leaving office, the administration instead ramped up its rhetoric to pressure Aristide to resign, stating on February 28th that "...his failure to adhere to democratic principles has contributed to the deep polarization and violent unrest that we are witnessing in Haiti today."¹³

At the same time, crisis planning by the U.S. began in earnest. United States Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) worked on plans in case of a mass migration from the violence and began assessing options and possible forces if an intervention was ordered.¹⁴ Informal calls to

potential troop contributors in the hemisphere were initiated, to facilitate the rapid response of countries if needed. Within Latin America, Chile provided an almost immediate commitment. Other countries cited the lack of resources and political constraints for immediate response but gave positive indications for future commitments. Due mostly to rough sea states, few Haitians fled the country by boat. Nevertheless, determined to avoid a mass migration crisis, those that chanced the seas and were picked up the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) were quickly repatriated back to Haiti. The direct repatriation efforts were well-planned and coordinated to maximize the deterrent effect on Haitians contemplating migration.

With Guy Phillippe threatening Port-au-Prince, among escalating violence and rampant looting, early on the morning of February 29th, President Aristide determined that he could no longer hold on to power and requested U.S. assistance to depart the country. In his resignation letter, President Aristide indicated he was departing to prevent massive bloodshed and casualties.¹⁵ Later accusations by Aristide that he was kidnapped by U.S. forces were unfounded. Through constitutional succession, the President of the Supreme Court, Boniface Alexander, assumed the Presidency and immediately requested a U.N. force to stabilize the country.

During the evening of February 29th, the U.N. Security Council passed resolution 1529, authorizing a Multinational Interim Force (MIF) to stabilize the country for 90 days and prepare conditions for a follow-on U.N. Stabilization Force. The U.S., France, Chile, and Canada made commitments for troops. Later that evening, the first elements of the U.S. Air Contingency Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) began arriving in Port-au-Prince. On March 1st French forces began arriving and on March 2nd the Chilean contingent and Canadian soldiers began arriving. On March 9th, Combined Joint Task Force Haiti (CJTF-Haiti), consisting of the U.S., French, Canadian, and Chilean forces stood up under the command of U.S. Marine Brigadier General Ronald Coleman with a French Colonel as the Deputy Commander. The force would eventually reach a total of 3700 personnel, with 2000 from the U.S., 900 from the French, 330 from Chile and 530 from Canada. The MIF transferred responsibility to the follow-on U.N. force led by Brazil on June 25th. The U.N. security force currently has 20 contributing nations with 12 from this hemisphere.¹⁶ Only four U.S. service members are part of the current U.N. force.

UNITED STATES OBJECTIVES

Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Roger Noriega outlined the U.S. government's objectives for the intervention, which included stabilizing the security situation, providing emergency humanitarian assistance, promoting the formation of an

independent government, restoring the rule of law, and encouraging steps to improve Haiti's dire economic conditions.¹⁷ However, the administration made it clear early on that the size of the U.S. force, along with these goals and objectives, would be limited.¹⁸ The administration viewed Haiti as a hemispheric and not strictly a U.S. problem. Therefore, the position was that other countries in the hemisphere should assist with Haiti, as the U.S. focused on worldwide events and commitments.¹⁹ Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld made this apparent on March 1st, 2004, the day after the U.S. deployed forces, when he stated "...we are already working to establish a U.N. force that will take over for the interim force...Indeed the leadership of the interim force might very well pass even before the U.N. force arrives."²⁰ Mr. Rumsfeld emphasized that the Department of Defense (DOD) had been working to improve the capabilities of the region's militaries to conduct peacekeeping and stability operations and thought it therefore appropriate to pass the mission off to other hemispheric countries.²¹ Clearly limiting the MIF's mission and perhaps to lower the international community's expectations, Mr. Rumsfeld publicly envisioned a U.S. force size of 2000 personnel.²²

General James T. Hill, Commander of U.S. Southern Command, whose command the MIF came under, indicated that the military objectives were to secure critical sites in Port-au-Prince to contribute to a more stable environment; assist in delivering humanitarian assistance; protect U.S. citizens; and facilitate the repatriation of Haitian migrants interdicted at sea.²³ The size of forces provided, along with the expected duration of only 90 days, forced the MIF to restrict its initial planning to securing Port-au-Prince and key northern cities. Forces were not available to place throughout the country; therefore planners had to determine which cities, towns and infrastructure were most critical to temporarily stabilize Haiti until the larger U.N. force would arrive. Planning for the operation was therefore constrained by limited objectives, limited forces, and a clear signal that U.S. participation would be brief and passed off to other countries as soon as possible.

DESIGN AND PLANNING OF THE MULTINATIONAL INTERIM FORCE

The design and planning of the MIF was done primarily at U.S. Southern Command with guidance from the Department of Defense (DOD) and the Joint Staff on the limited mission, scope and size of the force. The early involvement of coalition partners, the U.S. interagency, and U.N. planners was key to smoothly and effectively deploying the MIF, stabilizing key portions of the country, and transitioning to the U.N. in accordance with UNSCR 1542 adopted in April, authorizing the follow on U.N. stabilization force (MINUSTAH).

Critical to organizing the multinational force mission, objectives, organization and employment of its forces, was the immediate establishment of a MIF-Haiti-Coordination Center at SOUTHCOM Headquarters, where members of the U.S. interagency, coalition partners, and representatives to the follow-on U.N. Stabilization Force would meet and plan on a daily basis.²⁴ With the rapid escalation of the crisis and swift deployment of forces, this forum proved integral to identifying requirements, resolving and coordinating country specific issues, humanitarian aid, arriving forces, and facilitating communications between SOUTHCOM, CJTF-Haiti, the Department of Defense, the Department of State, coalition countries and the United Nations. Additionally, this group worked closely in identifying and coordinating potential contributors and capabilities to the follow-on U.N. force.

A Joint Interagency Planning Group (JIAPG) consisting of senior representatives from SOUTHCOM, DOD, the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of State, the U.S. Coast Guard, the U.S. Agency for International Aid (USAID), the United Nations and coalition nations was convened. The JIAPG met on March 3-5 to plan and coordinate the initial efforts and again on April 29th to May 1st to plan and coordinate the transition to the U.N. Additionally, SOUTHCOM members participated in the Policy Coordination Committee meetings on Haiti chaired by the National Security Council and the Department of State and had frequent interaction with the U.N. Secretary General's assessment team which prepared the report of the Security Council to authorize the size and scope of the follow-on force. The successful integration of the interagency and coalition expertise expedited precise action and guidance for the deployed forces.

The employment of an experienced advanced party from the U.S. Southern Command Standing Joint Force Headquarters (SJFHQ) contributed to the early synergy of deployed forces at the optimal locations and led to the rapid activation of the CJTF.²⁵ Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld directed the regional Combatant Commanders to establish SJFHQs within their commands to increase the ability to respond rapidly to global crisis to serve as the core of a Joint Task Force until it is fully staffed.

The MIF was organized under a U.S. commander with a French Deputy Commander. Subordinate commands included a French infantry battalion with a support battalion and special operations forces; a Chilean infantry battalion; U.S. and Canadian Forces under one command consisting of Marine Air Ground Contingency Task Force 8 and a Canadian infantry company; a U.S. aviation force; a Canadian aviation force; and a maritime component under the command of the U.S. Coast Guard, a first for such operations. (Figure 1)

CJTF-HAITI Task Organization

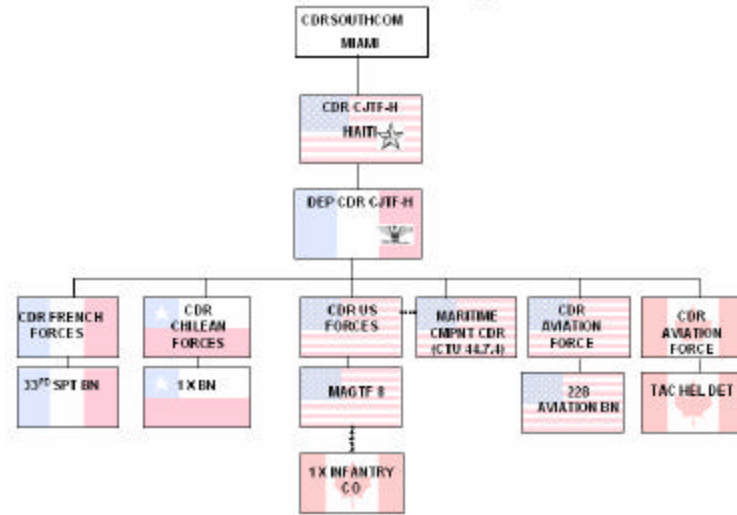


FIGURE 1

To avoid an expanded mission, initial directions given to Southern Command were to have U.S. forces remain in Port-au-Prince with the hope this would sufficiently stabilize the country until the U.N. stabilization force arrived. Unlike the 20,000 soldiers used in 1994, MIF planners grappled with being able to stabilize the country with a small force. Consequently, rather than wait for the full MIF force to arrive, as elements landed they immediately began patrolling and securing key sites in Port-au-Prince. MIF forces aggressively defused any violence and immediately established control in volatile areas. The Commander of U.S. forces met with Guy Philippe and bluntly warned him against interfering with the MIF and inciting future violence. MIF forces had sporadic incidents with both chimeres and rebel groups. By the end of the week Port-au-Prince was relatively calm, had generally returned to pre-crisis activity, with isolated looting and gunfire versus widespread anarchy of the previous week, allowing President Alexander to begin assembling an interim government.²⁶

However, it was evident that stabilizing only Port-au-Prince would not be sufficient. Reporting and assessments from other parts of the country indicated that many cities, notably Cap Haitien and Gonaives, continued being run by gangs, with continued instability and violence. The French forces agreed therefore to deploy to the northern part of the country. On March 15th, the French began moving troops to Cap Haitien, Gonaives, St. Marc, Ft. Liberte,

and Port de Paix. Without sufficient forces to move to the south, U.S. special operations forces and Canadian troops were used as a show of force and to establish a presence by conducting frequent assessment missions to cities and population centers, while elements of the Chilean force moved to Hinche to the east of Port-au-Prince. The remainder of U.S., Chilean and Canadian forces deployed throughout Port-au-Prince. (Figure 2)

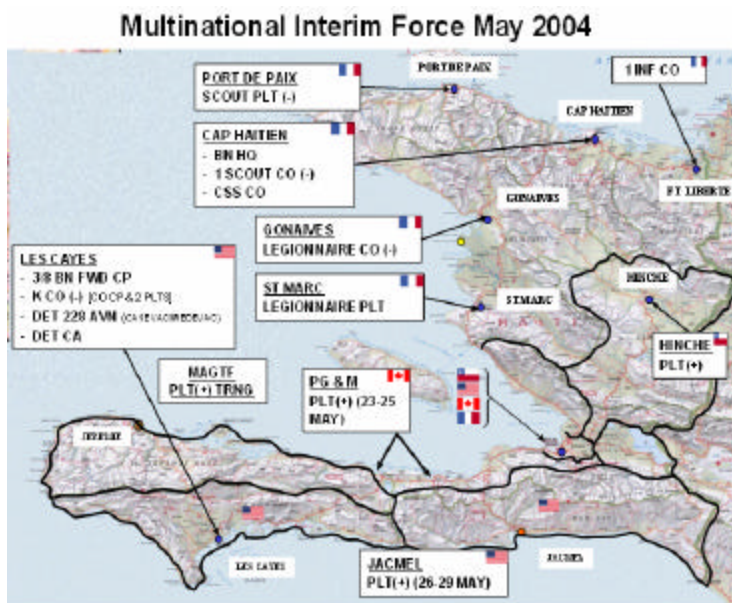


FIGURE 2

Although disarmament was not specified in the UNSCR 1529, or in planning guidance for the MIF, it was recognized that disarming the factions was necessary to establishing a secure environment. Consequently, MIF forces began disarming illegally armed Haitians and conducting operations with the HNP against known and suspected caches. Clearly, however, the MIF did not have the forces or resources to conduct wide-scale disarmament throughout the country.

TRANSITION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

The critical element for the MIF to transfer responsibility to the follow-on UN Force was the designation of a force lead and a UNSCR authorizing its deployment. Brazil gave early indications of its willingness to lead the follow-on effort and the Brazilian Foreign Minister confirmed this on March 23rd. Anticipating this commitment, the Brazilians began coordination

with SOUTHCOM and CJTF-Haiti. On March 19th, a Brazilian reconnaissance element arrived in Haiti to gather information. On April 12th a Brazilian liaison team was stationed at SOUTHCOM and another contingent deployed to Haiti in advance of the anticipated UNSCR authorizing the follow-on force deployment. An Argentine liaison detachment also was stationed at SOUTHCOM to begin coordination as they awaited a formal commitment of forces to the follow-on force from their government. On April 30th, UNSCR 1542 was adopted establishing the follow-on UN force – the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH) under Chapter VII of the U.N. Charter. It included a military component of up to 6,700 military troops and established a transfer of authority date from the MIF to MINUSTAH of June 1st. A conference was held in Haiti from May 3 – 7 to plan the details on the deployment of U.N. forces and redeployment of U.S. and French forces. Brazilian, Argentine and Chilean representatives attended the meeting. Although the transfer of authority occurred on June 1st to MINUSTAH, the transfer of responsibility did not occur until June 25th due to a delay in the arrival of Brazilian forces. Countries committing forces to MINUSTAH were unable to provide them on time and troop levels actually dropped from 3700 MIF troops to 2000 MINUSTAH troops for a short period.²⁷ It took the U.N. until December to build troop strength to its authorized level of 6700 and only now is the mission becoming effective.

EFFECTIVENESS OF THE FORCES

Using the stated U.S. objectives and U.N. Security Council Resolution authorizing its deployment as a measure, the effectiveness of the MIF was clearly positive. During the 90 days following its deployment, the MIF curtailed the rampant violence and stabilized large portions of the country. The constitutional succession of Government was allowed to work, and an interim Prime Minister selected to begin the difficult task of bringing the factions together and putting together a government. The ports and airports were opened and humanitarian aid flowed again. Mass migration did not take place and even narcotics trafficking reduced. A smooth transition to the U.N. Stabilization Force was conducted within the designated timeframe.

However, outside of areas where MIF forces were not present, the situation was more problematic. Many towns and villages had no governmental institutions functioning and the HNP disintegrated, leaving control to armed gangs. The U.N. assessment team reported Haiti had "...calmed down with the MIF but restricted resources, geographic areas, limited disarmament activities constrained the ability to establish a secure and stable environment outside of its presence."²⁸ Unquestionably, with a larger force and greater commitments from other nations, the MIF could have been much more effective throughout the country.

On another level, the confidence and understanding between the U.S. and Latin American nations on conducting crisis response, operating together, and organizing forces and operations, were incalculable and perhaps the untold positive story of the 2004 intervention. Although the region's militaries often come together for exercises, they rarely come together to resolve crises. Political, historic, and cultural differences have generally precluded intervention in another country in the hemisphere, particularly when the U.S. was involved. However, the rapid response by Chile, the willingness of Brazil to lead the UN effort, and the contribution of troops to MINUSTAH should be viewed as a positive indication of the capability and interest of hemispheric countries to cooperate and operate in defusing crises, separating factions, and addressing threats. Also, the fact that MINUSTAH is under Chapter VII of the UN Charter cannot go unnoticed. Early indications from most countries that they would only participate under Chapter VI (traditional peacekeeping) and would not participate under Chapter VII (peace enforcement) proved wrong. However, it cannot be overlooked that most countries were unable due to a lack of capability or resources, or unwilling due to political reasons to be a part of the MIF during the immediate response to the Haitian crisis.

Additionally, it took much too long for many forces to deploy in support of MINUSTAH, allowing security conditions to worsen and violence to spike. The structural conditions that led to the violence compelling the intervention remain and the future of Haiti remains bleak. This, however, requires more than a military solution. The MIF avoided further violence, bloodshed and a humanitarian crisis. It remains to be seen whether the ten-year international commitment necessary to move Haiti forward according to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan will be realized, or if the "...cycle of poverty, violence and instability starts again."²⁹

The same observation made by the Commander of Operation Uphold Democracy holds true after Operation Secure Tomorrow ten years later.

The lesson of Haiti...is that while military forces have excelled in achieving military tasks such as establishing order, separating combatants, or safeguarding relief supplies, they are less effective in solving non-military problems rooted in persistent cultural, economic and political strife. In cases like Haiti, military forces can help create a secure environment in which to pursue lasting political and economic solutions – but they cannot achieve political outcomes by themselves. The burden still remains on statesmen and the international community to pursue integrated approaches that enjoy a broad range of policy tools and processes to ensure long-term success.³⁰

RECOMMENDATIONS

Whether one agrees or not, the U.S. for the foreseeable future will be focused on the War on Terror. Concomitantly, U.S. attention and resources for this hemisphere will be limited. As the 2004 intervention in Haiti indicates, the U.S. is not willing to commit precious troops and resources unless its interests are directly threatened. Yet, the hemisphere faces significant problems from transnational threats, fledgling democracies, potentially catastrophic natural disasters, and endemic social, economic, and political problems in many countries. The potential and need for the region's countries to be prepared to respond to crises and improve their capacity for peacekeeping is therefore necessary. Haiti has proven that the hemisphere is willing to do so.

A first step is to improve the capability to respond quicker to crisis. This should be done through the OAS by establishing stand-by forces that countries commit to be used in crisis. The OAS has a standing group of experienced and talented senior military officers from throughout the hemisphere located at the Inter American Defense Board (IADB). This group can and must be energized. It wastes very talented officers doing mundane and anachronistic work, instead of focusing on threats to the region and making sound recommendations and judgments on how collectively to address them. The IADB should continuously study and identify requirements and capabilities needed to respond to various potential crisis and contingencies. The IADB through the OAS would then coordinate these requirements and capabilities by identifying forces on a stand-by basis through agreements with the various countries. It would then develop mechanisms for coordinating, training, and certifying these forces to ensure they are ready when called upon by the OAS. Finally, the IADB could coordinate with SOUTHCOM to exercise these forces during the frequent multinational peacekeeping exercises sponsored by SOUTHCOM. Since the mobility to crisis spots is a critical liability of virtually all countries, the U.S. contribution to stand-by arrangements could therefore concentrate on lift, thereby reducing U.S. troop commitments.

At the same time, the OAS must restructure itself to be able to respond to crisis by developing protocols and mechanisms to respond with more than delegations and unenforceable resolutions and declarations. It must become a more relevant organization and eliminate self constraints that preclude it from dealing with crisis in the region. This should include a decision making body that would be responsible for authorizing the deployment of the stand by forces for crisis, contingencies, or natural disasters. The funding could be worked through the U.N. for peacekeeping operations or through contributions by members of the OAS for other types of operations.

Latin America has world class peacekeeping training centers e.g. Argentina's CAECOPAZ and Chile's CECOPAZ that train world class peacekeepers. Additionally, the region has a long and distinguished history of participating in peacekeeping operations throughout the world leaving a legacy of experience and knowledge in conducting such operations. Nevertheless, despite the commitments of many countries to participate in Haiti, only one participated in the MIF and many others forces arrived late for the U.N. force, due to a lack of resources and preparation. Designating stand-by forces would not necessarily alleviate the resource constraints in some countries. The U.S. should therefore refocus and refine its efforts in assisting countries to improve their peacekeeping and crisis response capacity. The U.S. provides substantial peacekeeping financing to the region through Enhance International Peacekeeping Capabilities (EIPC) funding. While instrumental, the funding is by law limited to providing training and infrastructure for peacekeeping training centers. The use of this funding should be expanded to purchasing equipment for designated peacekeeping units and even for peacekeeping operations. In addition to training stand-by forces during its peacekeeping exercises, SOUTHCOM could exercise realistic scenarios in coordination with the IADB who would be focusing on such events full time.

CONCLUSION

The 2004 intervention in Haiti was a step forward for nations in the hemisphere to cooperate with forces and resources to resolve a regional crisis. The U.S. focus on the War on Terror, coupled with the ultimate failure of the 1994 intervention, influenced the decision to lead an intervention with limited forces and objectives. While the MIF achieved its limited objectives, much more could have been done with additional forces. Additionally, although the countries in the hemisphere have demonstrated a strong commitment by leading and participating in the UN stabilization force, the slow arrival of many of the troops significantly hindered its effectiveness and even allowed conditions to worsen. The hemisphere must therefore capitalize on this demonstrated progress in cooperative security and develop and institutionalize mechanisms to facilitate much quicker decision making and deployment capability of select forces from the region. This does not require a new structure or institution. Instead the OAS can develop the protocols and use the moribund IADB to identify, coordinate, and certify stand-by forces for immediate response to crisis. The U.S. pledge to such forces would be mobility and security assistance, thereby limiting troop commitments. The U.S. should refocus its efforts to improving peacekeeping capacity in the region by expanding the use of EIPC funding to equipping

peacekeeping units and funding operations and coordinating peacekeeping exercises with an energized and more active IADB.

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ENDNOTES

¹ Kofi A. Annan, "In Haiti for the Long Haul," *Wall Street Journal*, 16 March 2004, A20. This article sums up the view of a long term requirement to resolve Haiti's historical problems.

² Roger F. Noriega, U.S. Department of State, interview by Chris Bury, *Nightline*, Washington, D.C., 1 March 2004; available from <<http://www.state.gov/p/wha/rls/rm/30143.htm>>; Internet; accessed 31 January 2005.

³ Sue M. Cobb, U.S. Ambassador to Jamaica, *What Happened in Haiti*, 5 March 2004, 3; available from <http://trinidad.usembassy.gov/trinidad/What_Happened_in_Haiti.html>; Internet; accessed 31 January 2005.

⁴ Marc Grossman, *U.S. Policy towards Haiti*. Testimony presented to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, 15 July 2003, 1.

⁵ Maureen Taft-Morales, *Haiti: Developments and U.S. Policy since 1991 and Current Congressional Concerns* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, 1 December 2004), 17.

⁶ Grossman, 2.

⁷ Kofi A. Annan, *Report of Secretary General on Haiti* (New York: United Nations, April 2004), 3.

⁸ Roger F. Noriega, *The Situation in Haiti*. Testimony presented to the Committee on International Relations. Washington, D.C. U.S. Department of State, 3 March 2004, 33, available from <http://commdocs.house.gov/committees/intlref/hfa92343.000/hfa02343_0.HTM>; Internet; accessed 4 January 2005.

⁹ Southern Command, *Joint After Action Report Operation Secure Tomorrow* (Miami: Multinational Interim Force Coordination Center, United States Southern Command, 2004), 6.

¹⁰ Robert Graham, United States Senator, *Crisis in Haiti*, Remarks on the Floor of the U.S. Senate, 24 February 2004, available from: <<http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/F?r108:1/temp/r108hzUvya:e0>>; Internet; accessed, 31 January 2005.

¹¹ United Nations Security Council, *Statement by the President of the Security Council*, 26 February 2004, available from <<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/indoc/gen/no4/252/10/pdf/no425210.pdf>>; Internet: accessed 16 February 2005.

¹² Joint After Action Report, 6.

¹³ Taft-Morales, 7.

¹⁴ Joint After Action Report, 7.

¹⁵ Cobb, 2.

¹⁶ United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations. *Facts and Figures: Contributors* (New York: United Nations February 2005), available from <<http://www.un.org/Depts/dpkp/contributions>>; Internet; accessed 11 February 2005.

¹⁷ Noriega, 17.

¹⁸ Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense. *DOD News Briefing Transcript*. (Washington, D.C.: United States Defense Department, 1 March 2004), available from <<http://www.pentagon.mil/transcripts/2004/tr20040310-secdeff0501.html>>; Internet; accessed 4 January 2005, 2.

¹⁹ Ibid., 2.

²⁰ Ibid. 1.

²¹ Ibid., 2.

²² Ibid., 3.

²³ James T. Hill, GEN U.S. Army. *Press Availability on Haiti News Transcript*. (Washington, D.C.: United States Defense Department, 10 March, 2004), available from <http://www.pentagon.mil/transcripts/2004/tr20040310-0526.html>>; Internet; accessed 4 January 2005, 2.

²⁴ Joint After Action Review, 7.

²⁵ Ibid., 8.

²⁶ Hill, 5.

²⁷ Joint After Action Review, 35.

²⁸ Annan, *Report of Secretary General on Haiti*, 7

²⁹ Ibid., 2.

³⁰ Henry H. Shelton, "Contingency Operations in an Uncertain World: The Case of Haiti," *Strategic Review* (Fall 1998): 40.

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